

HEAT WAVE SAFETY RULES

* AVOID STRESSFUL ACTIVITIES DURING THE HOT SEASON

In the southwest desert the hot season usually extends from April to October; however, hot weather may occur at unexpected times of the year. Avoid heading out during the hot weather. Wait until fall, winter or spring for extensive outings on foot. Keep in mind that problems related to heat, sun and lack of water may occur in temperatures below 90°F.

* LIMIT ACTIVITIES TO COOLER TIMES OF THE DAY

Reduce activity during the heat. Strenuous activities should be reduced, eliminated, or rescheduled to the coolest time of the day. Individuals at risk should stay in the coolest available place, not necessarily indoors.

* KEEP PACE SLOW AND CARRY LIGHT LOADS

While walking or horseback riding in the desert, maintain an even pace that is comfortable to you. Rest often and never force yourself. Never carry more gear than you can use. Keep in mind that the more weight you carry the greater the stress and heat production. This will increase the likelihood of problems.

* WEAR SUITABLE CLOTHING

While shorts and sleeveless shirts may appear comfortable they are not suitable for desert wear. The most important function of your clothing should be to protect your skin from direct exposure to the sun. Lightweight and light-colored clothing reflects heat and sunlight better than darker material. The following items are recommended:

HAT	Your hat should have a wide brim that goes all the way around, protecting your eyes in front and your neck in back.
NECK PROTECTION	If the hat does not provide protection to the back of the neck, attach a piece of cloth onto the back of it. A large bandanna is not only great for protection but also has many other handy applications.
LONG SLEEVE SHIRT	Long sleeves provide protection from the sun and also help to protect you from scratches and insect bites. Cotton is probably the most suitable type of fabric.
LONG-LEGGED PANTS	Shorts and cutoffs are generally unsatisfactory for prolonged periods in the desert. Long-legged pants help your body maintain normal temperatures.
BOOTS	Boots should be durable, fit well, provide support, provide insulation from the hot desert ground and provide traction.

- * **DO NOT SMOKE**

Smoking will hasten dehydration and reduce endurance.

- * **KEEP MOUTH CLOSED**

Avoid unnecessary dehydration by keeping your mouth closed as much as possible. Avoid breathing through your mouth, shouting and unnecessary conversation.

- * **PUT LESS FUEL ON YOUR INNER FIRES**

If sufficient water supplies are not available, eating food will hasten dehydration. Dehydration poses a much greater threat to your survival than hunger.

- * **DRINK PLENTY OF WATER OR OTHER NON-ALCOHOLIC FLUIDS. DO NOT RATION!!**

Drink more fluids than the amount dictated by thirst. Drink at regular intervals rather than when you feel thirst. When your body becomes dehydrated, your brain's ability to recognize trouble may be impaired. If there is a limited amount of water, DO NOT RATION IT; attempt to conserve the liquids in your body instead.

- * **NEVER HEAD OUT ON IMPULSE**

DO NOT head out in the desert on the spur of the moment with few supplies, little or no water and no real idea of when you will return. Always be well organized and plan the entire trip.

- * **DO NOT TAKE SALT TABLETS**

- * **DO NOT DRINK ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES**

Alcohol hastens dehydration.

- * **DO NOT GET TOO MUCH SUN**